

REMARKS

1. In response to the Office Action mailed December 19, 2003, Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 36, 38, 39, 41, 44, 46, 48, 50, 53-67 and 69-71 were last presented for examination. Claims 44 and 46 were rejected in the outstanding Office Action. The remaining claims have been allowed. In the foregoing amendments, claims 44 and 46 have been amended. No claims have been added or canceled. Thus, upon entry of this paper, claims 36, 38, 39, 41, 44, 46, 48, 50, 53-67 and 69-71 will remain pending in this application. These amendments are believed not to introduce new matter and their entry is respectfully requested.

Examiner's Interview

2. Applicants thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to the undersigned in the telephonic interview conducted on February 10, 2004. A summary of the agreements reached in the interview are provided below.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

3. The Examiner has rejected claims 44 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended claims 44 and 46 to correct their dependencies thereby accommodating these rejections. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

4. In the noted interview, the Examiner indicated that dependent claims 44 and 46 would be in condition of allowance once the amendments accommodating the section 112 rejections are entered. The Examiner acknowledged that the stated requirement of incorporating the limitations of their respective base and intervening claims was made in error and is not required to place this application in condition for allowance.



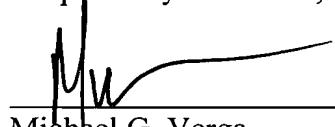
Application No. 09/812,274

Response to Action
Dated December 19, 2003

Conclusion

5. In view of the foregoing, this application should be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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